

MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment
FROM: Stephen Mordfin, AICP, Case Manager
 Joel Lawson, Associate Director Development Review
DATE: October 29, 2013
SUBJECT: BZA Case 18648, 1430 Rhode Island Avenue, N.W.

I. OFFICE OF PLANNING RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning (OP) recommends **approval** of the following:

- § 350.4(d), Floor Area Ratio (no increase permitted to function space, increase of 0.17 proposed).

II. LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

Address	1430 Rhode Island Avenue, N.W.
Legal Description	Square 211, Lot 858
Ward	2
Lot Characteristics	Unusually shaped lot with rear alley access
Zoning	R-5-E –high density general residence district
Existing Development	179-room hotel with 33 garage parking spaces
Historic District	Greater 14 th Street
Adjacent Properties	North: Across Rhode Island Avenue, high-rise apartment buildings South: Across public alley, moderate and high-rise apartment buildings East: Condominium apartments West: Four-story hotel
Surrounding Neighborhood Character	Mixture of residential and hotel uses

III. APPLICATION IN BRIEF

The applicant proposes to construct a 3,722 square-foot building addition onto a hotel established prior to May 16, 1980 that would increase the gross floor area and FAR, and expand the function room space and lobby.

A one-story addition on the east side of the building would be constructed to provide a new be 1,789 square feet in area conference room, lobby seating and an office. An office and lounge



area adjacent to the proposed function room would be converted to pre-function space and a meeting room. Three of the existing smaller meeting rooms at the rear of the building would remain, with the fourth converted to a general manager and sales office. On the west side of the building a painted steel trellis would be installed over an existing patio to create an outdoor seating area adjacent to the hotel's restaurant. The enclosure of the recessed on the first level of the building would expand the lobby area would be used to expand the lobby and the restaurant.

As a result of the enclosure of the recessed area beneath the second floor to expand the lobby, the existing circular drive would be shortened and a canopy erected over the proposed drive within public space. The three off-street parking spaces located to the front of the building and within public space would be eliminated.

No parking is required for hotel function space within the R-5-E district; parking is only required for guest rooms. Therefore, no additional parking would be required for this building addition. The thirty-three parking spaces within the below grade garage, accessible from the public alley, would remain, as would the 179 guest rooms.

IV. HISTORY

The building on the subject property was constructed in 1965 as an apartment house and converted to a hotel in the late 1970s. BZA Order 16762, dated June 9, 2008, approved a variance to Section 350.4(d) to permit an increase in FAR of the building from 6.0 to 6.12 for a hotel within the R-5-E district, and to increase the amount of area devoted to function rooms to a hotel established prior to May 16, 1980. The building addition was never constructed and the order expired on June 9, 2010. The subject application was filed on August 8, 2013.

V. ZONING REQUIREMENTS and REQUESTED RELIEF

R-5-E Zone	Regulation	Existing	Proposed	Relief
Height § 400	90-foot max.	89 feet	89 feet	None required
Lot Width § 401	None prescribed	107 feet	107 feet	None required
Lot Area § 401	None prescribed	18,194 SF	18,194 SF	None required
Floor Area Ratio § 402	6.0 No increase in function space permitted	5.94	6.11 to allow increase in function space	Required
Lot Occupancy § 403	75% max.	60%	72.2%	None required

VI. OFFICE OF PLANNING ANALYSIS

Variance Relief from § 350.4(d):

i. Exceptional Situation Resulting in a Practical Difficulty

The subject property was originally designed and constructed as an apartment building. Prior to 1980 it was legally converted to a hotel, with five meeting rooms established on the first floor. Due to the design of the building and the location of building columns, the applicant is unable to consolidate the five rooms into one large area, even though the rooms are all located adjacent to each other. Although Section 350.4 permits the remodeling, renovation and structural alteration of existing hotels, it does not permit the expansion of function space within an existing hotel. The applicant is unable to alter and expand the area of these function rooms without expanding the building footprint. Because the building was originally constructed as an apartment house, the structure was not designed to accommodate the large public rooms typically found within hotels and necessary for medium sized meetings.

ii. No Substantial Detriment to the Public Good

The proposed addition would not result in a substantial detriment to the public good. It would permit the hotel modernize its facility to allow it to accommodate a larger variety of meetings, functions and events, but not to change the use. The applicant does not expect the proposed addition to increase traffic to the site, and no increase in off-street parking would be required.

iii. No Substantial Harm to the Zoning Regulations

The subject property has been in use as a hotel for approximately thirty-five years. The proposed addition would enable the applicant to better serve its clients, and would not change the use of the property.

The Historic Preservation Office indicated that it would approve the application administratively.

VII. COMMENTS OF OTHER DISTRICT AGENCIES

No comments were received from other District agencies.

VIII. COMMUNITY COMMENTS

ANC 2F, at its regularly scheduled meeting of July 10, 2013, votes to support the application.

Attachment: Location Map

